

## Chapter 3

Ryan walked into the hospital, holding his phone like it was his last hope. His hands were still shaking from the shock of what he had just acquired, becoming a billionaire overnight. He had already moved some of the money, just a million dollar, from his Nova Coin wallet to his bank.

As he got closer to the corridor leading to his mother's ward, he heard raised voices. People were gathered, whispering and staring. Curiosity got the better of him and he pushed through the crowd, with his heart pounding. He heard a high pitched voice.

"Take her way, don't waste time. Her son has abandoned her because he has no money. So she can't just stay here and waste space!"

Breaking through the crowded corridor, Ryan froze at the sight before him. It was his mother they were yelling at.

His mother was being dragged toward the exit by two hospital guards. She looked weak, barely able to stand, her hospital gown hanging loosely on her thin frame. Her legs scraped the floor, and her eyes were shut tight, like she couldn't face what was happening.

Beside the guards stood a nurse. Her arms were crossed, and her face was locked in a permanent scowl. She watched with anger on her face as though the sight of Ryan's mother irritated her.

"No money, no treatment! That is the policy here at our hospital. We can't do anything to help you," the nurse barked, showing no form of respect or professionalism. She was harsh, as though she had a personal issue with Ryan or his mother.

She turned to Ryan's mother with disgust, shaking her head. "You think you can just stay here for free? We don't run a charity. Get her out of here—she's just taking up space!"

Ryan froze mid-step, horror flooding through him. The words felt like a slap. The nurse didn't even look at him; she was too busy watching his mother struggle. "If you don't have money, we can't work magic to cure you," she repeated, her eyes turning cold as she turned back to the guards. "Get her out now."

Ryan's chest tightened, and the world around him spun, his jaw tightening in anger and irritation from the nurse's action towards his mother.

"Stop!" he shouted, his voice trembling in anger "Take her back inside, now. I'll pay the bill!"

Heads turned at his voice, everyone was startled. The guards hesitated, confused, their grip on his mother loosening slightly.

The nurse, however, turned with the slow, deliberate indifference of someone used to dealing with hopeless cases. She scanned Ryan up and down, like she was assessing whether he even belonged in a place like this. Then she scoffed.

"You?" Her voice filled with irritation. "Weren't you the same guy begging here earlier?" She curled her lip into a frown.

"Did you finally crawl back to your wife to cry for cash? Or maybe this is part of your new scam?"

Ryan didn't respond to her insults. He didn't care what she thought of him. His focus remained fixed on his mother, who had started coughing weakly, the sound rattling in her chest like broken glass. She was still being held upright, her knees buckling.

"I said take her back inside," he repeated, stepping forward, with full authority. "I'll pay everything."

The nurse laughed so loud it drew everyone's attention to Ryan. She spun around, addressing the growing crowd.

"Okay, here he is," she said sarcastically. "Listen to him, everybody! The beggar's back from heaven and says he's ready to drop two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Amazing, isn't it?"

The bystanders began to whisper among themselves. Some chuckled, others wore looks of pity or skepticism. A few even pulled out their phones, hoping to record the scene.

The nurse turned back to Ryan with her arms crossed in front of her chest. "If this guy pays, I'll resign right now. And if he doesn't, I'll slap him myself and drag him out with his dying mother for wasting our time!"

Just at that moment, Dr. Jerry entered the corridor after hearing the chaos outside. His eyes landed on Ryan with visible irritation, as if seeing him again was a personal offense.

"Why are you still here?" the doctor snapped, his voice sounded clipped and cold. "You were told the conditions. We don't perform miracles here, Mr. Walker. If you don't have the money, stop wasting everyone's time and find another place that deals in pity."

The nurse nodded along, her arrogance intensifyin. "Exactly. Enough of the drama. It's embarrassing."

Ryan didn't answer. His face remained composed, but inside, he was raging.

He pulled out his phone, unlocking the screen with a trembling thumb. The brightness of the banking app burned into his eyes as he navigated to the transfer section. His fingers moved quickly and confidently—until the screen began to lag.

The buffering circle spun.

He tapped again. Nothing.

His heart thumped in his throat.

The app wouldn't load.

He killed the light on the screen and turned it back on to see if it would load, but nothing happened. The app was still lagging.

The nurse leaned closer, her brow raised in mockery. "Hah!" she laughed. "Look at him, pretending there is a fault with his phone. Now tell me how someone who could afford \$250,000 won't be able to buy a good phone. It's been what—seven minutes now? If you really had that kind of money, a transfer wouldn't take this long."

She tilted her head, her voice rising for the crowd to hear. "Let me guess. Your banking app is thinking about it, right? You've been scrolling, tapping, refreshing—and still nothing? Wow. This level of performance deserves an award."

"The poor phone is not to be blamed, stop hitting it for your dumbness," she said in a chuckle and everyone including the doctor was tempted to join in the laughter.

More laughter erupted around him. Some people pulled out their phones to record, others whispered insults under their breath.

Ryan looked up from his screen, his eyes burning. "It's my app..." he said, trying to keep his voice steady. "It's taking time to load. Just a minute, please, and I will send you your money."

But no one gave him the benefit of the doubt.

"You hear that?" someone snorted. "What banking app takes 10 minutes to load?"

"He must think we're idiots."

"Just stop humiliating yourself. If you have no shame, at least for your mother, just give up and leave."

The humiliation burned into his skin, but Ryan didn't let it show. He gritted his teeth, rebooting his phone and loading the app again.

The doctor sighed heavily. "This is ridiculous," he snapped. "Security, take him out. Now. This hospital needs to return to normal."

"No, please," Ryan said quickly, taking a step back. "Just wait—"

That hospital was the only hospital in town that could do that kind of transplant. If he decided to leave, it would take him more than 48 hours to leave town to the second hospital that could perform that surgery in the country. And his mother didn't have much time left.

But the guards were already moving towards him.

One grabbed his arm tightly, the other closing in from the side. Their grip was so tight. The pressure on his shoulder was sharp, forcing him to stumble slightly.

His mother let out a faint whimper as they began to separate him from her, and her hand weakly reached out, trembling fingers brushing his sleeve before falling limp again.

The crowd watched in silence now. No one intervened. No one cared.

And still—the app was spinning.

Ryan felt his knees go weak.

Every second dragged like an eternity. The laughter still rang in his ears, but so did something else—his mother's labored breathing. Her silence and helplessness.

She had sacrificed everything for him, and now, in the most crucial moment, he couldn't even get a damn app to load fast enough to protect her.

"Please," he whispered, his voice cracking as the guards began pulling him away. "Just one more second..."

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